

**Executive Action Briefing
ASAP Strategic Focus Area
Drug Endangered Children**

BACKGROUND: It is a recommendation of the Methamphetamine Task Force to develop strategies that will best equip professionals in prevention, treatment and law enforcement to respond to children exposed to drug endangered environments. Once carried out, this series of recommendations will enhance the capacity of the state and its communities to identify and respond to drug endangered children. ASAP will coordinate with its member agencies to implement actions to build the capacity to respond to this critical issue.

MISSION: Identifying the complex issues that impact children living in drug endangered environments and enhance the state's capacity to respond by expanding drug endangered children protocols to all Arizona communities and tribal governments.

Problem #1: Insufficient organizational structure to develop strategies, respond and monitor DEC.
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GOAL: Establish a Statewide DEC Alliance to facilitate policy and program discussions among all Arizona counties and tribal communities.

Recommended Action Steps:

- ✓ Re-structure the Arizona DEC Alliance to be under the leadership of GOCYF-DSAP and in line with ASAP priorities.
- ✓ Re-engage members of the Arizona DEC Alliance and seek new membership from counties and communities with active DEC programs.
- ✓ Continually seek grant funding for a dedicated DEC staff position and funding for an independent website (maintenance and development).
- ✓ Continue to provide training and technical assistance to counties and tribal communities statewide.

Actions/ Outcomes:

- ❖ The Arizona DEC Alliance is now under the leadership of GOCYF-DSAP and is meeting on a quarterly basis.
- ❖ The Alliance membership has been expanded to include representation from the Arizona Department of Corrections, Department of Juvenile Corrections and the Department of Health Services.
- ❖ The Arizona DEC Alliance has provided training to seven tribal communities in 2009.

Problem # 2: Limited coordination with other state and national efforts on DEC.
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GOAL: SAI (through the COPS Office) will facilitate a meeting among the Eight State Methamphetamine Alliance to discuss and enhance member states' DEC legislation, policies, protocols and other issues.

Recommended Action Steps:

- ✓ Coordinate with SAI and help facilitate the meeting with Arizona as the host site.
- ✓ Provide resources and information to the other states on the advancements Arizona has made.
- ✓ Following the meeting, review other states' DEC initiatives in order to enhance and improve DEC in Arizona.
- ✓ Participate on monthly National DEC calls that provide technical assistance to move forward DEC issues in Arizona.

Actions/ Outcomes:

- ❖ A member of the Arizona DEC Alliance participates on the National DEC Alliance calls to receive and share information with other states.

Problem # 3: Infrequent adoption of DEC protocols by Arizona counties and tribal communities.

GOAL: Establish statewide protocols and definitions that enhance or strengthen child abuse definitions to include exposure and use of drugs and methamphetamine specifically

Recommended Action Steps:

- ✓ The Arizona DEC Alliance will evaluate the current State DEC Protocol and update it to include DEC Level II (non-lab drug environment) cases and other necessary enhancements.
- ✓ Identify changes to Arizona statute to include DEC Level cases.
- ✓ Re-engage and provide assistance and training to counties and tribal communities to ensure that DEC Protocols are updated to include Level II cases and other enhancements.
- ✓ Provide outreach to tribal leadership to adopt DEC related language into tribal code.
- ✓ Establish measurable benchmarks to assess application of protocols and effectiveness of current strategies
- ✓ Create an evaluation component for the ongoing county and tribal DEC training program.
- ✓ Meet with DES and law enforcement to determine the baseline number of DEC cases so the Alliance can re-assess the use and determine the efficacy of enhanced protocols and training.

Actions/ Outcomes:

- ❖ The States DEC training curriculum has been expanded to include protocols for level II cases.
- ❖ Policy recommendations were provided to the ASAP member agencies regarding enhancing the current A.R.S. to include DEC Level II cases.
- ❖ The Arizona DEC Alliance has provided training to seven tribal communities on how to establish a DEC team and how the enhance tribal code to include level II cases.